DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 420 272 HE 031 329

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TITLE	A Region in Transition: The U.S.-Mexico Borderlands and the Role of Higher Education. The Border Pact Report. Understanding the Differences Series. Working Paper No. 6. Draft.
INSTITUTION	Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration, Washington, DC.; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Boulder, CO.
SPONS AGENCY	Ford Foundation, New York, NY.
PUB DATE	1997-08-00
NOTE	47p.; Papers prepared for the Border Pact Conference (August 28-29, 1997, Tijuana, Mexico and San Diego, California).
AVAILABLE FROM	WICHE Publications, P.O. Box 9752, Boulder, CO 80301-9752; http://www.wiche.edu; phone: 303-541-0290 ($8 plus $4 shipping/handling).
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120) -- Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Comparative Education; *Cooperative Programs; Cultural Influences; *Educational Trends; *Higher Education; *International Cooperation; Surveys; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS	*Mexico United States Border

ABSTRACT

This document is intended to foster cross-border collaboration in higher education and includes three papers examining issues and concerns characteristic of the border states of the United States and Mexico. It also reports findings of a survey of institutional leaders at 38 postsecondary institutions in the U.S.-Mexico border states. The first paper, "The U.S.-Mexican Border Region" (Paul Ganster) examines the function of borders and border regions, defines the U.S.-Mexican border region, and discusses characteristics of the border region's political and legal systems, economic asymmetries, demographic features, culture, and higher education structure. The second paper, "The Border: An Approach Through History and Culture" (Beatriz Calvo Ponton) discusses the historical context of regional processes, everyday life and social relationships, the border area, the economic impact of globalization, migratory processes and the creation of new ways of life, and the appearance of new social forces. The third paper, "Higher Education in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands: A Profile" (Francisco Marmolejo, Fernando Leon-Garcia) addresses the demographics of the U.S.-Mexican border, including such issues as education as a collective vs. individual asset, and centralism vs. federalism in government. Also considered are academic programs, institutional characteristics, funding, and government structure, institutional leadership, and administration. The final paper, "The Border Pact Survey" (Fernando Leo Garcia, Francisco Marmolejo) notes responses that address the concept of border, issues typical of border institutions, economic development, and differences in issues between institutions in the two countries. Some papers contain references. The Border Pact Memorandum of Understanding is appended. (DB)

ED 420 272

DRAFT

Understanding the Differences

A Working Paper Series on Higher Education in Canada, Mexico, and the United States

Working Paper #6

A Region in Transition: The U.S.-Mexico Borderlands and The Role of Higher Education

by
Beatriz Calvo Pontón
Paul Ganster
Fernando Leòn-García
Francisco Marmalejo

HE 031 329

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"UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES"
A WORKING PAPER SERIES ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN MEXICO, THE UNITED STATES, AND CANADA

WORKING PAPER NO. 6

A REGION IN TRANSITION:

THE U.S. - MEXICO BORDERLANDS AND THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

THE BORDER PACT REPORT

-DRAFT-

BY

BEATRIZ CALVO PONTÓN
PAUL GANSTER
FERNANDO LEÓN-GARCÍA
FRANCISCO MARMOLEJO

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PREFACE

The U.S.-Mexico border region is a vital area for the growth and promising future of North America, even though it is not always recognized as such. In our search for solutions to create a more integrated world which respects the uniqueness of different cultures and acknowledges that in a global village, other's aspirations, problems, and challenges are also our own, the U.S.-Mexico borderlands is an appropriate laboratory to find these answers.

Fostering collaboration in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands in partnership with border higher education institutions, community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, foundations, and units of government is the mission of BORDER PACT (Border Partners in Action). With the inaugural BORDER PACT conference on August 28-29, 1997, in Tijuana and San Diego, the conveners have laid the groundwork for the creation of an ongoing forum committed to effecting positive social change in the borderlands. A major conference outcome will be the creation of a network of higher education leaders who will work to foster more effective communication between border institutions and initiate efforts with other organizations and agencies to address regional challenges.

Norman Collins, The Ford Foundation's Representative for the Office for Mexico and Central America, conceived the idea for this unique educational collaboration and worked with others at the Foundation to ensure that financial support was available to bring the concept to reality. Almost at the same time, the recently created ACE-ANUIES U.S.-Mexico Higher Education Network recommended developing linkages among higher education institutions located in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, because of the region's uniqueness.

This support and encouragement from The Ford Foundation, as well as the insights and endorsement from the two national umbrella higher education organizations, ACE and ANUIES, have been the basis for the development of this publication designed to help BORDER PACT participants and others better understand the setting in which the project will unfold.

The changing face of the border region adds complexity and energy to BORDER PACT's charter. A binational team of authors was invited to sketch a profile of the border region: its demographics, history, culture, and higher education systems' characteristics and common issues. Each author has provided different perspectives on a common theme—the border's dynamism. The findings of a recently completed survey of institutional leaders of postsecondary institutions in the U.S./Mexico border states yields important perspective on the current state of higher education activities in the region. This paper, intended for educational policy makers and practitioners, presents a comparative approach as a way to help readers understand the differences and similarities characteristic of the border, as well as the common challenges and areas of opportunity. The initial draft of the paper was prepared for the inaugural BORDER PACT conference. A revised and expanded version which will include highlights and recommendations emerging from the conference will be published at a later date.

A similar spirit of cross-border collaboration has brought the BORDER PACT conveners together. They include the Consortium for North American Higher Education Cooperation

(CONAHEC) (formerly known as the WICHE/AMPEI U.S.-Mexico Educational Interchange Project), the Asociación Nacional de Universidades y Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES), the American Council on Education (ACE), and participating institutions. On their behalf, we acknowledge the many individuals who have given freely of their time to share their expertise with others.

They include our team of authors with whom I had the pleasure to collaborate: Beatriz Calvo Pontón, Professor and Researcher, Center for Regional Studies, Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez; Paul Ganster, Director, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, San Diego State University; and, Fernando León-García, Academic Vice President, CETYS University System. As a team we were able to overcome language barriers, cultural differences and logistical obstacles in the spirit of true cross-border cooperation and exchange to produce this important resource. We firmly believe that our cooperative efforts will inspire other researchers to pursue future binational and trinational collaborations.

Jere Mock provided valuable editorial assistance to the publication and Margo Schultz provided ongoing coordination of the communications with the authors, editor, and translators, as well as the layout of the final manuscripts. Magali Muria, a visiting scholar at CONAHEC, provided invaluable support in collecting and analyzing the border survey and related data. Thanks also to Carmen Villa Prezelski for her technical assistance and to Adrián Delgado for translating the text into Spanish. Thanks also to WICHE staff members Debby Jang (graphics support) and Mary Ellen Keller (production).

The BORDER PACT partners also acknowledge the 38 border institutions that participated in the survey and extend their gratitude to Rene Palacios and Victor Alcantar from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, and Bertha Hernadez and Kimberly Collins from San Diego State University, for their insights in the design of the survey. Additional thanks go to members of the BORDER PACT Steering Committee for providing useful insights for this comparative paper and for their leadership and insight in guiding the creation of this important initiative which will lead to new cooperative efforts to increase educational opportunities and social change throughout the border region.

Francisco Marmolejo
Director
Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC)
August 1997

THE U.S.-MEXICAN BORDER REGION

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INTRODUCTION

The border between the United States and Mexico is one of the most dynamic regions of the world. The region is highly urbanized with approximately 10 million people living in more than a dozen twin city pairs that straddle the international boundary. The economic asymmetries from one side of the border to the other are the greatest of any border region in the world. The political and legal systems of the countries are quite dissimilar. Despite the enormous differences, the border region has been transformed into a zone of convergence between the two systems, particularly since the mid-1980s. Under the stimulus of the globalization of the world economy and the North American Free Trade Agreement, regional transborder economies are growing and becoming more complex. In almost all subregions of the U.S.-Mexican border, transborder cooperation is increasing.

THE FUNCTION OF BORDERS AND BORDER REGIONS

Borders and border regions around the world traditionally have served to demarcate national territory and protect a country from its neighbors.[1] Borders exercised a defensive role, forming a barrier between one country and adjacent political entities. Physical security and defense from military invasion were concerns as were protection from unwanted cultural, religious, ethnic, or economic effects from other nations. As defensive barriers, border regions most often were marginal areas of the national territory, subjected to the policies of the national capital that were often prejudicial to inhabitants living near the international boundary.

[1] Lawrence Herzog, *Where North Meets South* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990) reviews the traditional functions of international borders. See also, Paul Ganster, Alan Sweedler, James Scott, and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, eds., *Borders and Border Regions of Europe and North America* (San Diego: San Diego State University Press, 1997).

In recent years, the function of many border regions has evolved from the traditional barrier role to that of a zone of integration between neighboring nations.[2] This is consistent with the globalization of the world economy, the revolution in transportation and communications, and the reduction or elimination of conflict along many of the international boundaries of the world. Border regions have obtained increased political autonomy and greater participation in the formulation of national policies that impact border zones. These developments have opened new possibilities for transborder cooperation at the local level, even when economic, administrative, cultural, or other asymmetries exist. In some cases, border regions have become laboratories where mechanisms for interaction and cooperation between adjoining nations are first worked out and implemented. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the emergence of newly independent states have created new international borders there that frequently function as protective barriers to neighboring states. On a world level, then, border regions are evolving in somewhat different directions.

DEFINING THE U.S.-MEXICAN BORDER REGION

The international border between Mexico and the United States is a precise line established by international treaty and carefully demarcated by a joint effort of both countries.[3] The U.S.-Mexican border *region*, however, has many definitions that vary according to the interests and perspectives of those studying the area. Some biologists define the border as a thin transect parallel to the international boundary, but many ecologists and environmentalists view the border region in terms of natural systems that are crossed by the international boundary. For example, air quality specialists are concerned about border air basins such as that of El Paso-Ciudad Juárez or areas impacted by industrial air pollution such as the gray triangle of northern Sonora and southern Arizona. When dealing with border rivers, many scientists not only examine the Rio Grande where it forms the international boundary between Texas and the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas but they also concentrate on the entire watershed that extends deep into northern Mexico and through New Mexico and Texas and into southern Colorado.

Some social scientists and policy-makers view the border region as consisting of administrative units adjacent to the border: 25 counties in the states of California, Arizona, New

[2] Oscar J. Martínez, *Border People: Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderland* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), provides an excellent discussion of the changing role of the U.S.-Mexican border region.

[3] The International Boundary and Water Commission (Comisión Internacional de Límites y Aguas), through its Mexican and U.S. sections carries out this function.

Mexico, and Texas; and 35 municipalities in the Mexican states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora, and Baja California. The Mexican and U.S. federal governments have defined the border region as 100 kilometers on both sides of the international boundary for purposes of joint environmental actions.[4] The border states are also referred to when defining the border region. While this approach makes sense for Baja California where most of the population and economic activity are concentrated close to the international boundary, it is a dubious approach for California where only about 10 percent of the state's population is close to the boundary.

Perhaps the best way to resolve the issue of definition is through a functional approach that includes geographical areas that are influenced by the presence of the international boundary. The core border region consists of areas adjacent to the international border that are significantly affected by the presence of the boundary. This includes the twin city population centers that characterize human settlements along the border from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. These cities and regions have strong ties to the other side through economy, society, culture, labor flows, and transborder environmental impacts. This is the border region's core with intense and increasingly effective levels of transborder cooperation and interaction occurring daily.

However, there is a second tier of cities that is influenced by the international boundary, although to a lesser extent than the border twin cities. This group includes urban centers somewhat removed from the border, but with significant transborder connections through economic activity, migration, culture, or other interactions. San Antonio, Monterrey, Chihuahua, Las Cruces, Tucson, Hermosillo, Ensenada, and, possibly, Los Angeles, might be included in this second level of border populations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BORDER REGION

Historical forces have produced a border region of some diversity from east to west. On the U.S. side, the eastern half of the border is poorer, more Hispanic, and with a more narrow economic base than the western end which is wealthier, has a broader economic base, and is more Anglo in population and culture. On the Mexican side, there is also some east-west differentiation, principally with respect to economic development. The western end of the Mexican border is more dynamic economically than elsewhere along the border. There are also strong contrasts from north to south across the border. The human settlement of the borderlands

[4] This definition was established by the 1983 La Paz Agreement and continued in the Border XXI process. See *U.S.-Mexico Border XXI Program Framework Document* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, October 1996).

is one of twin cities separated by expanses of lightly populated deserts, mountains, or in the lower Rio Grande, agricultural land or undeveloped rolling plains with scrub vegetation.

A defining characteristic of the border region is the presence of a number of large, dynamic communities along with numerous smaller, poorer communities. The larger communities such as San Diego, Tijuana, El Paso, and Ciudad Juárez are relatively wealthy and have a level of resources that enables them to at least partially cope with the challenges of growth and development in the region. Smaller communities such as Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Sommerton, Agua Prieta, Calexico, Ojinaga, and the colonias of the lower Rio Grande generally lack resources to even begin to adequately address the problems associated with the border condition.[5]

While the natural systems extend seamlessly across the border, the international boundary marks a very clear dividing line between two very different human systems. Some features of these systems do not extend across the border; others demonstrate a surprising degree of transboundary interaction with counterparts in the other country.

POLITICAL AND LEGAL SYSTEMS

The juxtaposition at the border of the highly centralized Mexican political system with the decentralized federal U.S. political system has broad implications for the daily lives of border residents. The differences in the two political systems have hindered bilateral cooperation on many transborder issues. In the United States, numerous federal departments and agencies as well as city and county local governments initiate policies that have importance for Mexico's border region. Historically, transborder activities of Mexican state and local agencies were carefully restricted by Mexico's Secretariat of Foreign Relations (SRE). However, over the past decade as liberalization, democratization, and administrative decentralization have moved forward, SRE has begun to facilitate local initiatives to foster transborder cooperation, realizing that local participation could often lead to effective problem resolution. The U.S. Department of State pursues a similar approach, encouraging local efforts of transborder problem resolution. This change in policy by the two federal governments emerged over the past decade, but has been particularly evident during the last three years.

Another difference in the political and public administration systems of the two countries that has important implications for local border relations is the nature of public service. In the United States, the majority of local, state, and federal government employees are included within various types of civil service systems. This assures that the professional staffs responsible for the day-to-day operation of agencies will remain in place despite changes in the elected officials. In Mexico, the situation is quite different. There, when a change of administrations occurs,

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[5] To improve the ability of smaller communities to address planning and environmental infrastructure issues and even to apply for grant funds and loans for infrastrucucture, the Border Environment Cooperation Commission with partial support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, established a fund to provide technical assistance to smaller border communities. See the WWW homepage of BECC.

government employees at all levels (federal, state, or local) are replaced by new political appointees. Hence, continuity and institutional memory are much more fragmented in public administration on the Mexican side of the border. Although some Mexican municipalities are taking steps to address the continuity problem in key areas such as planning, much remains to be done. Institutional continuity remains an important bottleneck for effective binational governmental cooperation.[6]

ECONOMIC ASYMMETRIES AND ECONOMY

Asymmetry characterizes the economic relationship between the two neighbors. The 1994 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the United States was 6,600 billion dollars, approximately 18 times that of Mexico's GDP of 373 billion dollars. The Gross Regional Product (GRP) of the greater Los Angeles area exceeds the GDP of Mexico, but with one-tenth the population. At the border regional level, the County of San Diego had a 1996 GRP of some 70 billion dollars and that of the Municipality of Tijuana was around 3 billion dollars. The combined annual governmental budgets of the County of San Diego and the City of San Diego are equivalent to the GRP of the Municipality of Tijuana. Although such marked asymmetry is less apparent elsewhere along the border, the disparities are still significant. These enormous economic asymmetries make transborder cooperation by government entities difficult due to the great differences in physical and human resources available to each side.

Despite the economic asymmetries from north to south across the boundary, the border economy has been quite dynamic in the post-World War II period. The sunbelt economic boom in the U.S. Southwest was mirrored on the Mexican side of the border. Beginning in the late 1960s, development of the *maquiladora* (assembly) industry in Mexican border cities resulted in significant job creation, averaging some 15 percent per year from the mid-1970s to the present. Because of maquila- and border trade-driven economies, Mexican border cities were insulated from the severe recessions in Mexico in the early 1980s and in late 1994.

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The U.S. and Mexican border populations are highly urbanized, with more than 90 percent of the border population living in the twin city pairs. The more arid western end of the border tends to be more highly urbanized than the eastern end in the lower Rio Grande Valley where more small agricultural-based settlements exist in the areas outside the urban cores. In addition to

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[6] Many problems of transborder government communication are discussed by Joseph Nalven, "An 'Airy' Tale along the Border," *New Scholar*, 9 (1984), 171-199. Tonatiuh Guillén López, *Gobiernos municipales en México: entre la modernización y la tradición política* (Tijuana and México, D.F.: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte and Grupo Editorial Miguel Angel Porrúa, 1996) discusses decentralization and administrative change at the municipal level.

urban concentration, border populations are distinguished by rapid growth rates. Table 1 clearly demonstrates this urban dynamism.

TABLE 1

ANNUAL GROWTH RATES OF TWIN CITIES BY DECADE, 1940-1990

City	1940-50	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90
San Diego	6.4	7.1	2.1	2.6	2.4
Tijuana	13.4	9.8	6.4	4	5.0
Calexico	1.9	2.4	3.3	4.3	2.6
Mexicali	12.8	10.4	4.4	2.5	2.5
Nogales, AZ	2.0	1.8	2.3	7.5	2.2
Nogales, Sonora	7.7	6.3	3.4	2.7	4.9
El Paso	3.5	11.2	1.6	3.2	1.9
Ciudad Juárez	9.4	7.5	5.1	3.3	3.8
Eagle Pass	1.3	6.6	2.7	3.9	-.4
Piedras Negras	7.6	7.6	-.04	7.2	3.6
Laredo, TX	3.1	1.8	1.4	3.3	3.0
Nuevo Laredo	7.0	4.9	5.0	3.0	0.8
McAllen, TX	6.9	6.3	1.5	7.6	2.4
Reynosa	3.4	8.1	6.6	3.4	3.2
Brownsville	6.1	7.5	9.1	6.2	1.5
Matamoros	11.0	7.3	4.2	3.1	3.5

Source: For the United States, Peter L. Reich, ed., Statistical Abstract of the United States-Mexico Borderlands (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1984), and County and City Data Book, 1983. For Mexico, Margulis and Turián, Cuadro C2. The 1980-1990 annual growth rates are calculated from David Lorey, ed., United States-Mexico Border Statistics since 1900. 1990 Update (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1993).

The rapid population growth of border cities, driven by the expanding border economy, has created a continuing infrastructure and urban services crisis in border cities, particularly in the Mexican cities that have fewer resources and less ability to cope with the burgeoning demand. Typically, Mexican border towns have grown at about twice the rate of their U.S. counterparts. This creates an impossible task for city planners and social service agencies. For example, Tijuana's population since the 1980s doubled every 14 years and that of San Diego doubled every 29 years.

Migration is the most important factor shaping the demographic picture of the binational border region. For example, Tijuana's population grew 6.9 percent between 1987 and 1988; 1.9 percent of the growth was natural increase and 5 percent was the result of immigration. During the same period, Ciudad Juárez saw a 1.8 percent natural increase and a 7.5 percent increase from

migration.[7] In 1980, 48.9 percent of the population of the border counties and municipalities consisted of migrants. Of the 48.9 percent, 8.4 percent were from a foreign country. The 1980 population of the Mexican border municipalities had 31.8 percent migrants while the figure for the U.S. border counties was 58.2 percent. Eleven percent of the migrants in the Mexican border municipalities were foreign born compared with 20 percent for the U.S. border counties. [8] U.S. border communities are further distinguished by considerable numbers of undocumented immigrants who are primarily from Mexico.

Hispanics comprise an increasing percentage of border cities' populations. Brownsville and Laredo are over 90 percent Hispanic, El Paso is more than 70 percent Hispanic, and San Diego, the most Anglo of the U.S. border cities, has gone from 15 percent Hispanic in 1980 to about 25 percent Hispanic today. These changes present interesting political implications, both domestically and internationally, for regions such as San Diego where the demographic shifts are dramatic.[9]

BORDER CULTURE

The presence of Hispanic populations on both sides of the international boundary, stimulated by important transboundary economic ties, has encouraged strong social and cultural linkages. Although difficult to quantify, these social and cultural aspects of interdependency are nonetheless real and growing. Oscar Martínez, in his work titled *Border People*, as well as in earlier works, discusses the emergence of groups of *borderlanders* who participate in a vibrant

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[7] David E. Lorey, ed., *United States-Mexico Border Statistics since 1900* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1990), Table S129, pp. 53 ff.

[8] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, *County and City Data Book*, 10th edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), and Peter L. Reich, *Statistical Abstract of the United States-Mexico Borderlands* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1984).

[9] The connection between the Latino population and U.S. and Mexican foreign policy is explored in Richard R. Fagen, "The Politics of the United States-Mexico Relationship," in Clark W. Reynolds and Carlos Tello, eds., *U.S.-Mexico Relations: Economic and Social Aspects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), 344; Rodolfo O. de la Garza, "Chicanos and U.S. Foreign Policy: The Future of Chicano-Mexican Relations," Juan Gómez-Quiñones, "Notes on an Interpretation of the Relations Between the Mexican Community in the United States and Mexico," and Carlos H. Zazueta, "Mexican Political Actors in the United States and Mexico: Historical and Political Contexts of a Dialogue Renewed," in Carlos Vásquez and Manuel García y Griego, *Mexican-U.S. Relations: Conflict and Convergence* (Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Research Center and Latin American Center, 1983).

border culture that is firmly linked to Mexico and to the United States.[10] These individuals, who are able to function in both cultures and participate in activities on both sides of the border, in some ways represent the future of the border. At the current level of interdependence, the percentage of borderlanders in the total border population is not large, but as the region moves toward more advanced integration the number of specialists who are fully functional on either side of the border will need to increase.

In a number of areas along the border, binational cultural activities are prospering. Transboundary cultural events in fine arts, classical and contemporary music, and literature are ubiquitous. Transboundary linkages are also apparent all along the border in the area of popular culture. *Corridos* and other traditional Mexican folk songs are encountered everywhere in the binational border region, as are traditions in popular literature and folk tales, humor, folk medicine, and other beliefs. Youth movements, such as that of the "cholos" from East Los Angeles, spread to U.S. and Mexican border cities and ultimately to Mexico City.[11] Sports are also a feature of the transboundary popular cultural life. Professional and intercollegiate athletic teams regularly draw fans from across the border.

At the regional level along the border, particularly within the framework of the twin-city pairs, transborder interactions have demonstrated a remarkable expansion due to the processes and circumstances already described. In the San Diego-Tijuana region, for example, the micro-regional expansion of transborder contacts and linkages has been significant over the past decade or so, particularly since 1993 and the NAFTA discussions.[12] The growth of collaborative relations has been widespread involving local and state government agencies, higher education, nongovernmental organizations of all sorts, private businesses, chambers of commerce, and civic and cultural groups. The result has been to significantly expand the number of people involved in transborder activities and to move the entire binational region toward increased interdependence and integration.

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[10] Oscar J. Martínez, *Border People: Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1994), and his "Border People and Transnational Interaction," in Paul Ganster and Eugenio O. Valenciano, eds., *The Mexican-U.S. Border Region and the Free Trade Agreement* (San Diego: Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, San Diego State University, 1992), pp. 97-104.

[11] See José Manuel Valenzuela Arce, *A la brava ése* (Tijuana: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, 1988), for a discussion of *cholos*. Also see Steven Loza, *Barrio Rhythms: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1993) for a discussion of the influence of Los Angeles barrio music on Mexico.

[12] Paul Ganster, "Transborder Linkages in the San Diego-Tijuana Region," in Norris C. Clement and Eduardo Zepeda Miramontes, eds., *San Diego-Tijuana in Transition: A Regional Analysis* (San Diego: Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, San Diego State University, 1994), provides a discussion of the process and a listing of San Diego organizations with ties in Mexico.

Anecdotal information suggests that this process is ubiquitous along the border. Despite short-term setbacks associated with economic cycles and political difficulties, the level of transborder interaction is increasing. The U.S.-Mexican border region is so dynamic that it is not easy to predict how far the process of integration will advance. Nevertheless, Mexican and American border communities have made much progress toward conceptualizing and managing their regions in a transborder mode.

NAFTA has been an important catalyst. It made border issues a high priority on the bilateral policy agenda and brought increased federal involvement and funding to border issues, particularly by the U.S. federal government. At the same time, the long-standing inclination of the U.S. government and the decentralization process in Mexican public administration have combined to facilitate greater transborder cooperation at the local level in the border region. The increasing transborder linkages and economic, social, and cultural interactions are clear indicators of the direction of change in the U.S.-Mexican border region. This zone that is the interface between two asymmetrical partners is moving toward greater interdependence and regional integration.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE BORDER

Higher education will play a key role in shaping a sustainable future for the border. Colleges and universities will train the leaders who will manage the region in the future.[13] The next generation of border leaders will need the skills to enable them to function in two different systems, cultures, and languages. Border institutions will be challenged to fulfill this obligation.

NAFTA has been the impetus for Mexican and U.S. border colleges and universities to pursue transborder cooperation through faculty research, faculty exchange, student exchange, and joint programs. More students, faculty, and administrators are realizing that to be competitive, university graduates must be able to operate on both sides of the border, in both languages and cultures. Although there is movement in the direction of better articulation of Mexican and U.S. universities in the border region, much more change is needed to adequately serve the current and future needs of the region. This contrasts strongly with Europe where, for example, joint advanced degree and research programs have been created in the Regio Basiliensis region of France, Switzerland, and Germany, and an area-wide undergraduate program for the

[13] Paul Ganster, "Education, the Border Region, and Free Trade," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain Council on Latin American Studies, 1991* (Albuquerque: Center for Latin American Studies, University of New Mexico, 1992), and his "La educación superior en la frontera México-Estados Unidos ante el TLC," *Comercio Exterior*, 44:3 (marzo 1994), pp. 242-248; Judith I. Gill and Lilian Alvarez de Testa, *Understanding the Differences: An Essay on Higher Education in Mexico and the United States* (Denver: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1994).

European Economic Community has been developed. Nevertheless, U.S. and Mexican border universities have taken a leadership role on bilateral cooperation and programmatic development, and as a result, the border region is providing innovation in this important area.

Universities in the border region are beginning to develop programs to address the challenges and opportunities inherent in economic integration. In part, these endeavors are in response to the pressures to internationalize the curriculum; in part, they are the outgrowth of the traditional emphasis on area studies at regional universities. They are also linked to the changing job markets produced by the dynamic border region. U.S. and Mexican border universities have a significant advantage in responding to the challenges presented by economic integration and global competition.

THE BORDER: AN APPROACH THROUGH HISTORY AND CULTURE

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of "region" has been approached from various disciplinary angles (economics, geography, politics, and culture) with each one emphasizing or being restricted to a certain area of knowledge. It has also been looked at from different theoretical approaches ranging from positivist and functionalist, based upon empiricism and the neutrality of regions, all the way to a description of economic and social development through a comprehensive approach.

A new approach to the concept of understanding the border as a region requires non-traditional ways of looking at realities. While "border" and "region" are historical concepts built upon specific, real situations, the terms are also understood within the concept of "social space." The approach we propose refers to the border as both a region and as social space.

The notion of social space, far from representing physical and unchanging territorial dimensions, regards regions as subject to continuous movement and change. Therefore, it is not possible to make any final definition of "region," for "historical and regional space expands or contracts, and becomes more or less important according to the significance of its social elements" (Venegas, 1993). That is, a region as a "historical entity" is defined by the "diversity of social phenomena (and by) the unequal development of different human groups" (Ibid). Two examples illustrate this point. In the last century, the U.S.-Mexico border reached up past California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. Wars, special interests, and negotiations between the two countries changed the location of boundary lines, thus causing Mexico to lose territory. In another situation, changes in the channel of the Río Grande brought on the conflict over whether the Chamizal area continued to belong to Mexico or had become a part of the United States. Finally, the presidents of both countries signed an agreement in the 1960s in which it was recognized to be a part of Mexico. Thus, social spaces are defined by their own peculiarities and assume their own specific historical content.

UNDERSTANDING HISTORICAL CONTEXT

An explanation of these complex regional processes, from both a micro and macro point of view, requires that they must be situated in time, and considered within and outside their immediate time and space contexts. Whatever happens today in the region has to do with what happened yesterday, and therefore, whatever happens tomorrow will have something to do with what is happening today. Consequently, regional processes are best understood through the collective interdisciplinary work of economists, geographers, sociologists, managers, planners, linguists, anthropologists, historians, ethnographers, political scientists, architects and others. The idea is to bring together different disciplinary perspectives and approaches to arrive at a holistic, comprehensive understanding of regional processes. Thus, "regional studies, as a developing science involving several disciplines including history" (Venegas, 1993), is one way to build the concept of region.

This way of defining regional traits requires a dual effort in understanding how local processes can relate the present through their own histories, but at the same time how local practices can fit in with and influence, over time, broader social processes and histories.

Therefore, to provide a historical explanation of regional processes, external forces influencing the border region must be considered along with the affects internal border forces have on areas beyond the border region. For example, local practices such as the daily travel of undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans to the United States through Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana or other border cities have been a determining factor in proposals for national anti-immigration policies and laws by the U.S. federal government. Furthermore, as internal and external forces collide, they often create new local processes. A change in the local cultural patterns as a result of large migratory flows from different states in Mexico to the most developed border cities such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez is an example of this phenomenon.

A comprehensive social/historical perspective regards the concept of region as being involved in multidirectional relationships: temporal dimensions examining the past, present, and projecting into the future; and spatial directions moving between local, state, national, and international structures and levels, the last of which have special significance due to globalization in these times. However, these directions are also simultaneously crisscrossing different areas such as politics, economics, ideology, sociology, and ecology within these different structures and levels. Thus, this multidirectional historical quality is what defines the essence of the border as a region and a social space.

EVERYDAY LIFE AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The historical approach to the study of social spaces emphasizes analysis of what men and women are doing on a daily basis and explains how and why social practices and processes are being built. The everyday perspective, far from considering such persons as neutral and non-historical, views them as subjects with their own history and culture who are involved in complex social relationships. That is why "whatever his place may be in the social division of work, (every man) has an everyday life", and this (everyday life) "also has its own history" (Heller, 1991). Therefore, the social subject is a historical subject with his own customs,

traditions, languages, religions, ways of thinking, of viewing life and living it, and also has his own needs, interests and demands. This way of getting to know real situations, centered around the concept of everyday life and based upon uniqueness, specificity, differences, and diversity among subjects and social realities, is arrived at by "generalizing the individual and individualizing what is general" (Hymes, 1996).

The political dimension is another element of the historical point of view. Subjects guided by their own personal, group, institutional and/or official interests, and committed to achieving their objectives, are taking action and negotiating strategies to arrive at agreements at the local, national, and international level. In this game of negotiation, usually played under conditions of inequality, results favor regional interests in power. In many cases, this causes tension and polarization among regional groups and subjects.

THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER: DEFINING ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Several issues having to do with the U.S.-Mexico border illustrate these concepts.

THE BORDER AREA

The United States and Mexico share a physical space of more than three thousand kilometers of border ranging from the Pacific to the Gulf of Mexico. They also share certain common conditions such as climate, topography, and natural resources and they share regional histories and cultures: one past, two main languages, and the presence of ethnic groups such as Indians, Mormons, and Mennonites. But at the same time, these are "diametrically opposed" realities (Garza, 1996) due to their great differences and contrasts.

This border area is unique because it is the only international border in the world having a considerable number of human settlements known as paired cities on both sides of the boundary.[14] If each settlement represents a social space, then the border region dispels the myth of homogeneity, and becomes distinguished mainly by its contrasts, differences, diversity,

[14] There are 12 of these paired cities: Tijuana/San Diego, Mexicali/Calexico, Yuma/San Luis Río Colorado, Nogales/Nogales, Agua Prieta/Douglas, Ciudad Juárez/El Paso/Las Cruces, Ojinaga/Presidio, Del Río/Cd.Acuña, Piedras Negras/Eagle Pass, Nuevo Laredo/Laredo, Reynosa/McAllen and Matamoros/Brownsville (Alegría, 1992; Garza, 1996).

tensions and conflicts. Thus, these settlements are complex social, political, and cultural mosaics.[15]

ECONOMIC PROCESSES: GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is present on the border, especially in Mexican cities such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, through the maquiladora or offshore processing industry. Maquiladoras have opened up many jobs for young men and women who receive the minimum wage prevailing in the region. This circumstance has changed lives and ways of living. One apparent change is the role that women are playing in the work force and their impact in economic, social, and family structures. This has brought about a strong process of functional change from traditional male/female roles.

MIGRATORY PROCESSES AND THE CREATION OF NEW WAYS OF LIFE

Mexican migration into northern Mexico and the United States has brought about the creation of different processes and cultural interactions on both sides of the border. Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez have attracted many groups of Mexicans who are leaving their birthplaces. Some remain in Mexico while others "make it to the other side," searching for opportunity. They settle either on one side or the other, bringing with them their history, culture, and lifestyles.

The migrants are confronted by the social and cultural patterns of the new locality which causes them to change their traditions. But on the other hand, many varied cultural patterns from "outside" are also influencing established patterns. Changes in language, the main indicator of a culture, is one example. The language and ways of speaking of local groups such as cholos or people who speak "pocho," "spanglish," or introduce anglicisms or Spanish influences into the original tongues are regional ways of expression and communication.

Changes brought about by migration are contributing to new historical and cultural processes. Increasingly, these changes are a source of local, national, and cross-border friction. For example, unchecked and unplanned growth of cities such as Ciudad Juárez has made them into areas of conflict. There is a lack of jobs, public utilities, schools, hospitals, electricity, water, urban infrastructure, facilities, and housing. Extreme poverty and misery are increasing. Land takeovers and squatter settlements are common. Violence, manifested in many ways, has become a part of everyday life. The social consequences of immigration to the U.S. are just as serious. Legal residents of Hispanic origin as well as undocumented immigrants have become victims of poor living conditions and discriminatory practices. Thus, there are great similarities among poverty areas and neighborhoods on both sides of the border.

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[15] This paired-city border situation is quite complex. On the one hand, each city is a unique reality in itself in marked contrast with its neighbor. It could be said that this border is distinguished by being the most unequal in the world (Garza, 1993). On the other hand, together with their neighbors they also become unique realities themselves while contrasting with others. For example, Tijuana/San Diego or Ciudad Juárez/El Paso have a more direct linkage with the international arena due to their closeness to global economic processes. This fact influences everyday border processes especially for Mexicans, for there is more familiarity and identification of subjects with United States culture than with Mexican culture.

The significance of these tensions will intensify over time. Population trends show that 4 or 5 million Mexican immigrants will enter the United States during this decade (Martí, in Machuca, 1996).

THE APPEARANCE OF NEW SOCIAL FORCES

Border processes are also giving rise to the continuous appearance of different kinds of social groups. Some groups are being expressed as political parties and movements and regional pressure groups such as in the case of human rights and non-governmental organizations, in addition to environmental, religious, Indian, and Hispanic groups. But other new power groups have also appeared with specific regional, economic, and political agendas, such as different business groups.

These and other changes will continue to contribute to the profound complexity of the U.S.-Mexico border. There is a tremendous need for new strategies which will enable the two countries to cooperate. Any handling of the specific circumstances of the border, based upon an understanding of the region from historical and social space perspectives, must include binational commitments. There is no doubt that the BORDER PACT which is about to be signed will be a great effort toward that end.

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HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS: A PROFILE

FRANCISCO MARMOLEJO AND FERNANDO LEÓN-GARCÍA

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, defined as a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding (Waters, 1995) is a visible daily reality in the U.S.-Mexico border region. Nevertheless, its actors interpret it in different ways due to the evident asymmetries between both countries and due to cultural differences.

The educational system, specifically higher education, is not been immune to this phenomenon. The U.S.-Mexico border region is experiencing a gradual integration which has reached such a degree that today it must be analyzed as a whole region, with its own distinctiveness and common problems. Higher education institutions on both sides of the border increasingly face the need to respond more effectively to the challenges imposed by their regional context. The paradox is that efforts in this direction still continue being non-institutionalized and marginal (D. Natalicio, 1996).

In the coming years once NAFTA has been fully implemented, the U.S.-Mexico border region will have a larger role as a transformational axis for the economic integration in both countries. Its complex social, economic and cultural agenda will uniquely challenge the region's institutions of higher education to look for innovative strategies to make their interactions more effective, blurring traditional institutional and national boundaries.

U.S-MEXICO BORDER: THE DEMOGRAPHIC WAVE

It is not possible to analyze higher education in the U.S.-Mexico border region without taking into consideration the demographic context of the region. An analysis of the region consisting of a classification of zones of influence, rather than a mere measurement of geographic

distance from the border[16] (see Chart 1 and Graph 1), affords a better opportunity to observe the more significant differences between the countries.

CHART 1

MAIN URBAN AREAS IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER REGION

ZONES OF INFLUENCE	MEXICO	UNITED STATES
ZONE 1: Border cities/counties	Tijuana-Tecate Mexicali San Luis Río Colorado Nogales Agua Prieta Ciudad Juárez Ojinaga Ciudad Acuña Piedras Negras Nuevo Laredo Camargo Ciudad Miguel Alemán Reynosa Matamoros	San Diego Calexico-El Centro Yuma Nogales Douglas El Paso Presidio Del Río Eagle Pass Laredo Río Grande Roma Mc.Allen-Edinburg Brownsville-Harlingen
ZONE 2: Region with secondary influence	Ensenada Hermosillo Nuevo Casas Grandes-Cuauhtemoc-Chihuahua Nueva Rosita Monterrey	San Marcos, Irvine, Riverside, Anaheim, Pomona, Santa Ana Tucson-Sierra Vista Las Cruces San Antonio-Corpus. Christi-Kingsville
ZONE 3: Region with marginal impact	Ciudad Obregón-Guaymas Saltillo-Torreón Ciudad Victoria	Los Angeles-San Bernardino-Indio Santa Barbara-Bakersfield Albuquerque-Santa Fe Austin

[16] See the contribution from Paul Ganster in this publication.

GRAPH 1

MAP OF THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER REGION

In some cases, urban areas located at a relatively long distance from the border have been included as a part of Zone 3. This is the case with Bakersfield, California in which 25 percent of the population has a Mexican origin. In Mexico, cities such as Torreón and Ciudad Victoria were included due to the influence they have from and upon the border.

On the basis of such a classification, it is possible to observe that the entire border region in both countries is experiencing higher population growth compared with the state and national levels in general. During 1995/96, a total of 7.6 million inhabitants lived in the border cities located in Zone 1, 57 percent on the Mexican side and the remaining 43 percent on the U.S. side.

Collectively in the three zones, there were 28.2 million inhabitants, 68 percent in the U.S. border region and 32 percent in Mexico.

During the first half of the current decade, the population in the U.S.-Mexico border region has grown 12 percent in the U.S. and 16 percent in Mexico. The Mexican border cities have experienced a 22 percent growth, compared with the 10 percent experienced at the national level. Also, the U.S. border cities have grown 12 percent during the first six years of the decade, in contrast with the 6 percent increase recorded at the national level. With one exception — Ojinaga, Chihuahua in which the population decreased 0.2 percent — the cities and towns in the border contact zone have experienced very high levels of population growth. The cases of Nogales, Sonora (38 percent) and Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila (38.8 percent) on the Mexican side, as well as Edinburg, Texas (35.5 percent) on the U.S. side are the most noteworthy (see Chart 2).

CHART 2

U.S.-MEXICO BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

	MEXICO			U.S.		
	Pop. 1990	Pop. 1995	% Incr. 90/95	Pop. 1990	Pop.1996	% Incr. 90/96
Zone 1	3,571,321	4,350,681	22%	2,990,612	3,340,406	12%
Zone 2	1,554,467	1,759,862	13%	8,668,923	9,637,747	11%
Zone 3	2,593,578	2,862,174	10%	5,563,403	6,298,510	13%
TOTAL	7,719,366	8,972,717	16%	17,222,938	19,276,663	12%
Border States	13,469,426	15,251,430	13%	51,926,828	57,140,931	10%
National	87,298,970	95,772,426	10%	262,755,000	277,469,280	6%

Source: U.S.: U.S. Census Bureau. (1991) (1996). Mexico: INEGI (1991) (1996).

Another significant aspect to be highlighted is related to the important differences regarding the age-group pyramid. The Mexican population in the border region is younger than the population in the U.S. border area. During this decade in the contact zone between the two countries, 64 percent of the population is younger than 30 years of age, in comparison with 48 percent on the U.S. side (see Chart 3). The opposite is true with the older population, while in Mexico only 36 percent of the population is older than 29 years, in the U.S. this segment represents 52 percent of the total population.

CHART 3

AGE GROUPS IN THE U.S.-BORDER REGION

	MEXICO					U.S.				
	0-4	5-19	20-24	25-29	29>	0-4	5-18	19-24	25-29	29>
Zone 1	12	30	12	10	36	8	22	11	10	50
Zone 2	12	34	13	10	41	9	21	10	10	51
Zone 3	13	36	12	9	38	8	19	10	10	53
TOTAL	12%	31%	12%	9%	36%	8%	20%	10%	10%	52%
Border States	10	36	12	10	43	7	24	6	19	43
National	11	37	11	9	42	7	14	7	7	64

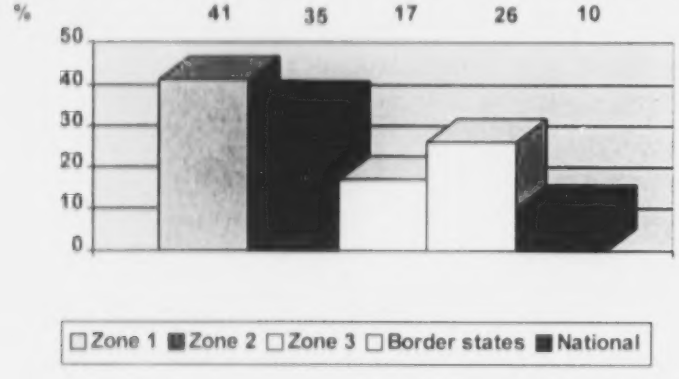
Sources: U.S.: U.S. Census Bureau. (1991) Mexico: INEGI (1996)

The fact that a major proportion of the Mexican population is younger than their U.S. counterparts imposes formidable challenges. There will be an ever increasing need to provide education at all levels, as well as to create job opportunities.

An additional and highly relevant variable with different implications for each country is the percentage of Hispanic origin population in the U.S. border region (see Graph 2).

GRAPH 2

U.S.: PERCENTAGE OF HISPANIC ORIGIN POPULATION BY REGION (1990)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1991).

Within this frame of reference it is worth mentioning that higher education systems on both sides of the border are the result of historical developments in each country. At the same time, they respond to different philosophical principles. Border institutions reflect these influences. Some distinctive aspects are mentioned here[17]:

EDUCATION: COLLECTIVE OR INDIVIDUAL ASSET?

In contemporary Mexico, education is considered to be a major factor in upward social mobility (Sarukhan, J., 1994). Higher education is thus perceived as a social asset and for this reason, professional careers, as well as the curriculum, are defined in accordance with this idea. When academic programs are designed, it is assumed that what is good for the society will be good for the student. In other words, it is emphasized that pursuing education will benefit the student because it is good for the society as a whole. Students are perceived as a crucial element in a social transformational process, rather than as consumers of an educational service. This is quite different in the United States, where the students are commonly referred to as consumers or clients.

Along these lines, since specific discipline-oriented approaches are common, the curriculum in Mexican academic programs includes only a minimum of general education content. This helps to explain the high degree of rigidity in undergraduate programs in Mexico, and explains why there is a mandatory "social service"[18] component in every Mexican institution that offers undergraduate degrees.

In contrast, in the United States education is considered useful for the society as long as it is beneficial for the individual. As a result, academic programs are more general in content. This explains the high degree of flexibility in American undergraduate education, which allows the student to select a wide range of courses and professional concentrations.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT: CENTRALISM VS. FEDERALISM?

It is important to analyze higher education in Mexico within the context of the national project that was established as a result of the Mexican revolution at the beginning of this century.

[17] The authors recognize that, given space limitations, there is a risk of generalizing. It is important to make clear that it is not our intention here to accurately analyze the differences between both higher education systems. For further detail with respect to these dissimilarities, see Gill, J. and L. Alvarez (1995) and F. Marmolejo (1997).

[18] Undergraduate students are expected to volunteer at least 800 hours, preferably in community-based or government initiatives as a part of the requirements for obtaining a degree.

The so called "post-revolutionary project" emphasized the ruling role of the State in society. Therefore, the federal government is responsible for providing education to the people, since education is conceived to be one of the main supports of the social structure. This scheme has led to the creation of a national education system characterized by strong government intervention. Although there have been visible decentralizing efforts at the elementary education level during recent years, the substance of educational policies is still defined at the federal level to the point of mandatory textbooks in primary schools.

More specifically, when dealing with higher education, the differences between the two countries are quite diametric. In the United States, higher education primarily falls under state jurisdiction (which includes the participation of local communities). The role of the federal government is fundamentally limited to the administration of student financial aid programs, ensuring observance of anti-discrimination regulations, and providing funding for research projects. Representatives of public institutions must negotiate with local legislatures and the state governments on issues such as subsidies and authorizations for long-term indebtedness.

In Mexico, federal government exerts a strong influence, despite efforts for decentralization, because it allocates subsidies and economic stimulus to autonomous universities at the same time that it determines the budgets of the non-autonomous institutions and it regulates private colleges and universities. State governments in Mexico play a complementary role in providing matching subsidies to public universities and their participation in higher education policy is marginal. Furthermore, non-autonomous public institutions—such as technological institutes and the recently-created technological universities—function under the Mexico City-based Public Education Ministry's (SEP, its Spanish acronym) centralized control.

An important component of the American higher education system is related to the accreditation of institutions and academic programs, both of which are vital for determining quality standards. In the border states, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in California, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS) in Arizona and New Mexico, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in Texas, provide this oversight. The counterparts of these agencies in Mexico, the National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education (ANUIES, its Spanish acronym), and the Mexican Federation of Private Colleges and Universities (FIMPES) recently have been working toward the creation of similar institutional accreditation structures. However, this effort is still at its beginning stages.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Mexican higher education institutions offer 4 to 5-year undergraduate programs through which a "licenciatura" degree is obtained upon fulfillment of the other requirements (the previously mentioned social service and thesis defense). With the exception of recently-created technological universities [19] (which will become similar to the American community colleges) higher education institutions do not offer 2-year programs such as those offered in the United

[19] It is worth mentioning that there is currently only one technological university in the border area.

States. Master's and Doctorate programs are relatively similar in length and workload to those offered in the United States.

In the United States, there is a clear difference between 4-year colleges and universities and community colleges, which offer 2-year programs, classified as Associate Degrees. Upon obtaining an Associate Degree, students can transfer to a 4-year college or university and obtain a Bachelor's degree, after they have completed a certain number of courses.

Considering the U.S.-Mexico border region as a whole, there are 136 higher education institutions that offer intermediate undergraduate degrees (2-year programs in the case of the U.S. and teacher training schools or technological universities in the case of Mexico). Also, there are 108 programs that offer up to "licenciatura" or bachelor's, 78 offer up to Master's and 45 offer up to Doctorates.

CHART 4

U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS CLASSIFIED BY LEVEL OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OFFERED[20]

	Intermediate *		Undergraduate		Master's		Doctorate		TOTAL		GRAND
	Mexico	EUA	Mexico	EUA	Mexico	EUA	Mexico	EUA	Mexico	EUA	TOTAL
ZONE 1	17	18	22	10	16	7	2	5	57	40	97
ZONE 2	11	22	26	4	12	6	6	11	55	43	98
ZONE 3	8	61	20	27	9	28	3	18	40	134	174
Total	36	101	68	41	37	41	11	34	152	217	369

** It includes Community Colleges in the U.S. and Normal Schools and Technological Universities in Mexico*

Source: México: ANUIES (1996). Anuario Estadístico de la Educación Superior and U.S.: HEP (1995). 1995 Higher Education Directory

THE INSTITUTIONS: CHARACTERISTICS AND ENROLLMENT

Mexican higher education institutions can be classified as either public or private. Public ones are either autonomous or those which are dependent on the federal government. Private institutions are classified in general as non-profit, some of them have a religious affiliation. As for the type of academic programs, higher education institutions on the Mexican border can be teacher training schools (which are also known as Normal Schools), technological institutes (which offer in general "licenciatura" programs basically in the areas of engineering and management), technological universities (which offer a 2-year degree known as "técnico universitario"), or universities (which offer "licenciatura" degrees, master's and, in a few cases, doctorates).

[20] For a more detailed description of the cities included by zone, see Chart 1.

There are two public autonomous higher education institutions in each of the Mexican border states of Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuila, while in Baja California, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas, there is only such institution per state. The largest by far is the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon, the third largest in the country, with an enrollment in undergraduate and graduate levels of about 53,000 students. A total of 152 higher education institutions are located in the Mexican border area (see Chart 5) with an aggregate enrollment of 148,036 students (ANUIES, 1996).

In the case of the United States, institutions are usually categorized according to the Carnegie Classification, which includes community colleges (which offer 2-year Associate degrees), 4-year colleges (which offer Bachelor's and sometimes one or two Master's), comprehensive universities (which offer Bachelor's and a wide variety of Master's), and research oriented universities (which offer a wide variety of Doctorate degrees in addition to undergraduate and Master's degrees). As for private institutions, they can be non-profit or specifically created as proprietary. On the U.S. side of the border, there are 216 higher education institutions which enroll 1,407,162 students (HEP, 1995).

CHART 5

U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND ENROLLMENT[21]

	MEXICO				U.S.			
	Public	Private	Total	Enrollments	Public	Private	Total	Enrollments
Zone 1	31	26	57	35,252	21	19	40	234,596
Zone 2	22	33	55	90,162	22	21	43	307,994
Zone 3	24	16	40	22,622	29	84	133	864,572
Total	77	75	152	148,036	92	124	216	1,407,162

* Includes undergraduate and graduate students.

Source: México: ANUIES (1996). Anuario Estadístico de la Educación Superior and U.S.: HEP (1995). 1995 Higher Education Directory

Here is where there is an acute asymmetry between the two countries, and specifically in the border region. There are, by far, fewer Mexicans of student age enrolled in higher education than their American counterparts (see Chart 6). In Zone 1 on the U.S. side 63 percent of the group between 19-24 years of age is enrolled in higher education, while on the Mexican side only 22 percent of 20 to 24 year olds is enrolled.

The difference is similar in the other two zones. On the Mexican side of Zone 2, 25 percent of the student age population is enrolled in higher education in comparison with 49 percent in

[21] For a more detailed description of the cities included by zone, see Chart 1.

U.S. Finally, in Zone 3, 38 percent of the Mexican people in that age group is currently enrolled in higher education in comparison to 90 percent of the Americans. It is worth noting that in this zone (where important cities are located), the percentages are larger for both sides of the border, which leads to one assume that more resources should be allocated to education in the other areas. The figures become more dramatic at the state level. Only 12 percent of Mexicans in the border states are enrolled in higher education compared with 88 percent of the population in the U.S.

CHART 6

U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS INDICATORS[22]

	ACCESS INDICATORS	
ZONES	Total *	Age-group **
Zone 1: Mexico	2.6	22.17
Zone 1: US	7.02	62.67
Zone 2: Mexico	3.15	24.84
Zone 2: US	4.88	48.76
Zone 3: Mexico	4.67	3.77
Zone 3: US	8.97	89.95
Border States: Mexico	1.25	11.66
Border States: US	6.01	88.36

*Calculated ratio: H.Ed. Enrollment/Total population
** Calculated ratio: H.Ed. Enrollment/19/20-25 age group

Sources: U.S.: U.S. Census Bureau. (1991) Mexico: INEGI (1996)

Also, even though the number of institutions seems high, there are border communities, especially in the contact zone, in which there are no higher education institutions only extensions of other schools. Such is the case of Nogales, Arizona; Agua Prieta, Sonora; Piedras Negras, Coahuila; and Eagle Pass, Texas; among others.

Higher education options in other cities are very limited, especially on the Mexican side, as is the case in Reynosa, Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros, in the state of Tamaulipas. Despite the fact that the two cities' population is almost a million (INEGI, 1996) there are only three technological institutes, small branch offices of the Autonomous University of Tamaulipas, and a few small private schools there. These institutions enroll a total of 7,537 students (ANUIES,

[22] For a more detailed description of the cities included by zone, see Chart 1.

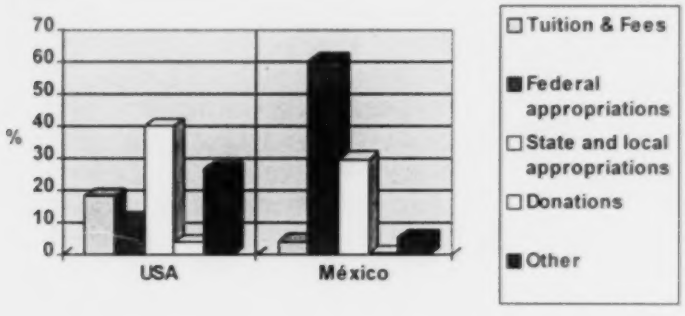
1996), which represents only 0.78 percent of the total population. This case illustrates the imbalance in educational offerings, as well as the educational deficiencies in some cities.

FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Asymmetries between Mexico and the United States are clearly reflected with regard to the percentage of national expenditure that is allocated to higher education. While in Mexico only 0.7 percent of the GDP is devoted to education, 2.4 percent is spent in the U.S. (OECD, 1996). There are also differences in government funding, since in Mexico it is directly allocated to public institutions, through direct annual appropriations and incentive funding programs. For these reasons, tuition in Mexican public universities is very low. Private universities do not have access to those resources, they depend on tuition and corporate donations to finance their operational expenses and capital investments. There is no accurate information available on private institutions. As for public schools, federal subsidies represent on average 60.3 percent of their total income, 29.7 percent comes from state appropriations, 4.1 percent from tuition, 0.3 percent from donations and the rest (5.6 percent) from other sources (SEP-ANUIES, 1993). (See Graph 3).

GRAPH 3

1993 SOURCES OF REVENUES FOR PUBLIC HIGHER DUCATION INSTITUTIONS



Source: Mexico: (ANUIES, 1993). U.S.: (NCES-U.S.DOE, 1996)

In the United States direct funding is mainly given to public institutions, through state and local subsidies. Occasionally, private institutions can also access public funds. Nevertheless, unlike the Mexican experience, state support only represents 40 percent of the income in public schools and 3 percent in private institutions (NCES-U.S.DOE, 1997). Federal government support, through educational credit and scholarships, exists in both private and public institutions and represents an important funding source. Similarly, resources for research can also be granted to private and public institutions. Finally, institutions obtain an important amount of

their income through tuition and fees (representing 18.4 percent of public and 42 percent of private colleges' income).

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE, INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

Another important factor to be taken into account when analyzing institutions on both sides of the border is related to forms of governance and management. The idea of a governing board, made up of people who are not necessarily associated with the institution, is very common in American institutions, and is also present to a certain extent in private Mexican universities. Mexican public institutions, controlled by the federal government, are usually ruled by authorities who are appointed by the central government. Finally, autonomous Mexican public universities follow norms of self-governance that range from a board of regents appointed by a university council, such as those in Sonara and Leon, where the board is made up of distinguished university members, to cases, such as the Autonomous University of Tamaulipas where the whole community, including the students, elect the president.

Presidents in all Mexican public autonomous universities are selected from among professors or staff-members from the same institution; for this reason, inter-institutional mobility is minimal. By the same token, there is a pre-defined term of office, with the possibility of reelection in some cases. At the same time, there is a university council or assembly, which exerts its authority on issues such as the authorization of the institutional budgets, the offering of academic programs, and in some cases the appointment of the president and deans of colleges. This council is typically made up of the deans. a representative of the faculty from each school and one or two student representatives from each school.

In the United States, the governing board is the supreme authority. It is usually made up of prominent members of the community. Faculty and student representation is rare or nearly non-existent. In the case of public institutions, the members of the board are usually appointed by the governor of the state, or elected by the citizens at the polls. Among other functions, the board appoints the president, after conducting a search process. It is common practice for candidates from other institutions to be considered during the search process. According to a study by the American Council of Education, 75 percent of the presidents of colleges and universities came from other institutions and only one out of every four presidents was an internal candidate (M.Ross, 1993). Deans and executive level staff-members are selected through a similar search mechanism. Unlike Mexico, there is not a pre-determined term for a president. Finally, as far as academic programs are concerned, there is an academic senate to provide oversight and policy direction.

A FINAL NOTE TO A VERY PRELIMINARY BEGINNING...

In the end, the differences in the philosophical tenants of the two systems of higher education, the ways in which the institutions are funded or how their leaders are selected might not be what is fundamentally important. The fact that the students elect the president at UNAM will not matter much to the boy in Nogales does not have a school to attend. Similarly, the American icon of local control is unlikely to be much on the mind of that young woman in El Paso who is trying to balance school, motherhood and work and is unable to get a tuition waiver.

Today's Mexican border states were once the untamed North, and the U.S. border states were once the wild West. Necessity linked us together then and it continues to link us together today. The solutions for the challenges which confront us are unlikely to come from far away capitals.

As has been observed here, and as can be observed on a daily basis on the border, there is no shortage of both similarities and differences in the higher education systems of Mexico and the United States. As Paul Ganster and Beatriz Calvo have so clearly outlined in their contributions here, the border region, for good or evil, is inexorably linked. The rapid changes our shared region is undergoing dictate immediate action. Now is not too late but it is also not too early for institutions of higher education to establish common agendas for our common ground.

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THE BORDER PACT SURVEY

FERNANDO LEÓN GARCÍA AND FRANCISCO MARMOLEJO [23]

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a part of the BORDER PACT initiative, which aims to foster collaboration pertaining to the U.S.-Mexico border among postsecondary institutions and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), a survey was conducted during the summer of 1997 to provide a broad overview on the current state of activities in the region. In particular, the survey sought to determine the perceptions and attitudes of institutional leaders toward the U.S.-Mexico border, the breadth and results of current involvement in the area, and a possible agenda for future action.

METHODOLOGY

A two-page, eight-question instrument was sent to 97 institutions, considered to either have relevant activities in or have a geographical proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border. Of the sample of institutions, 32 were from Mexico (32.9 percent) and 65 were from the U.S. (67.1 percent). In terms of institutional denomination, 81 percent were public and 19 percent private. An attempt was made to represent all the states along the border: for the U.S., this encompassed Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California; for Mexico, it comprised Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora and Baja California.

TABLE 1

SAMPLE OF INSTITUTIONS BY COUNTRY

Country	Public	Private	Total	Percent
Mexico	27	5	32	32.9
U.S.	52	13	65	67.1
Total	79	18	97	100

A total of 38 institutions responded to the survey (40 percent), 27 of which were from the U.S. (71 percent) and 11 from Mexico (29 percent). The institutional denomination was about the same as the sample chosen as reflected by 81 percent of the respondents being public and 19

[23] The authors want to express their appreciation to Magali Muria for her support in the collection and analysis of data.

percent private. All border states in the U.S. were represented by at least one institution as follows: Texas 6, New Mexico 1, Arizona 7 and California 13. The same condition was true for Mexican border states: Tamaulipas 2, Nuevo Leon 2, Coahuila 1, Chihuahua 1, Sonora 2 and Baja California 3.

TABLE 2

INSTITUTIONS RESPONDING BY COUNTRY

Country	Public	Private	Total	Percent
Mexico	8	3	11	29
U.S.	23	4	27	71
Total	31	7	38	100

RESULTS

PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING THE CONCEPT OF BORDER INSTITUTIONS

On the issue of whether institutions considered themselves to be border institutions, 87 percent responded affirmatively (33 of the 38). Of those who considered themselves border institutions, slightly over half were not located in border communities (17 of 33).

Among Mexican institutions 72 percent said yes (8 of 11) while in the U.S. it was 92.5 percent (25 of 27). The most common reason given to justify their response was geographical proximity (68 percent) followed by a broad array of thematic interests (37 percent). It is important to point out that in particular 18 percent (6) highlighted the large amount of Mexican-Americans either on campus or around their geographical service area.

INVOLVEMENT IN BORDER ISSUES

All of those institutions which considered themselves border institutions were also involved in border issues. The responses were categorized accordingly and at the top of the list were issues related to education (58 percent), economic development and/or trade (45 percent) , immigration (18 percent), followed by technology and infrastructure (13 percent), health (11 percent) and language (11 percent). By country, the top issues for Mexican institutions were education (82 percent) and economic development and/or trade (27 percent) while for their counterparts in the

U.S. the issues were economic development and/or trade (52 percent), education (49 percent), environment (33 percent) and immigration (26 percent).

TABLE 3

CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN BORDER ISSUES (%)

Issue	Mexican Institutions	U.S. Institutions	Total
Education	82	49	58
Economic Development/Trade	27	52	45
Environment	9	33	26
Immigration	0	26	18
Technology/Infrastructure	9	15	13
Health	0	15	11
Language	0	15	11
Culture	0	4	5

EXPERIENCES IN BORDER INITIATIVES

In terms of the results of current cross-border initiatives, those who responded reported to have had positive experiences (63 percent or 21 out of 33). The rest of the institutions (37 percent or 12 out of the 33) went on to describe a list of current activities and/or membership in cross-border groups. Some reference was made to limitations such as the differences in parameters and regulations which have already been discussed extensively and documented in previous WICHE-AMPEI reports.

Collaboration was said to have occurred most frequently with educational institutions across the border (76 percent), followed by educational institutions on the same side of the border (58 percent), while involvement with non-educational institutions were reported in equal proportions within or across the border (47 percent).

ATTITUDE TOWARD FUTURE INVOLVEMENT IN BORDER ISSUES

All of the institutions surveyed responded that they should be involved in border issues. The reasons stated were because of the importance that border issues have for the region (39 percent), for the welfare of the community (34 percent) and because of the institution or its mission (32 percent). Some differences were observed by country with respect to the relative position of the responses: for U.S. institutions, first came the importance for the region, then the institution or its mission, and the welfare of the community; for Mexican institutions, the welfare of the community came first, the importance for the region next, followed by common interests and common concerns, the institution or its mission, and globalization.

BORDER ISSUES THAT REQUIRE ATTENTION

When asked about the issues that merit some attention from postsecondary institutions, the most frequent responses were economic development and/or trade (55 percent), education and the environment (50 percent each), and immigration (29 percent). While an analysis by country reveals that institutions coincide in their responses concerning economic development and/or trade, and education and environment, immigration appears to be a greater concern in the minds of U.S. institutional leaders.

TABLE 4

BORDER ISSUES THAT MERIT ATTENTION ACCORDING TO INSTITUTIONS (%)

Issue	Mexican Institutions	U.S. Institutions	Total
Education	54	48	50
Economic Development/Trade	72	48	55
Environment	63	44	50
Immigration	9	37	29
Technology/Infrastructure	18	18	18
Health	9	22	18
Language	9	11	11
Culture	27	0	8

Furthermore, institutions were asked to prioritize the issues that they presented and a similar pattern was found as in the previous section, with the aggregate results yielding the following order of preference: education, immigration, economic development and/or trade, and the environment. By country, the major difference was that U.S. institutions placed immigration first, education second, and economic development and/or trade third, while for Mexican institutions the order was education and the environment receiving equal preference followed by economic development and/or trade.

TABLE 5

PRIORITIZED BORDER ISSUES THAT MERIT ATTENTION (%)

Issue	Mexican Institutions	U.S. Institutions	Total
Education	45.5	18.5	26
Economic Development/Trade	36	15	21
Environment	45.5	4	16
Immigration	9	26	21
Technology/Infrastructure	9	4	5
Health	0	4	3
Language	9	4	5
Culture	9	0	3

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the survey reiterated some of the issues covered by the existing literature on the border and border institutions.

First is the concept of border and its different interpretations. Based on the perceptions of the respondents in this study, further evidence was provided to the contention that the border does not begin or end in cities located immediately across the U.S.-Mexico border but is rather intertwined with multiple factors and elements, some of which relate to the economy, history, and culture.

Second, there was a reaffirmation of issues typical of border institutions such as the environment, education, health, immigration and culture among others.

Third, an issue that appears to command more attention than in the past refers to economic development and/or trade perhaps as result of current global trends and as a by-product of international accords such as NAFTA.

Fourth, the study also pointed to some major differences in terms of the relative importance of issues between countries. For example, the environment appears to have been high on the agenda for U.S. institutions while it is only now beginning to be a part of the agenda for their peers in Mexico. On the other hand, immigration almost appears to be a non-issue for Mexican institutions while for their colleagues in the U.S. it is of utmost importance.

Fifth, notwithstanding the above, more attention is required of issues that do not appear to receive enough attention at this point but that if left unattended will affect border communities in the long run. These issues are health, culture, technology and infrastructure, and language.

Above all, what is visible is the need for more communication, articulation and coordination of institutions across the U.S.-Mexico border that will lead in the direction of a common agenda with mutual benefits. The border area in its broadest conception appears to be the ideal testing ground for the development of global leadership. And colleges and universities appear to be the institutions best positioned to make this a reality.

MOVING TOWARD A U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS HIGHER EDUCATION AGENDA FOR ACTION

Higher education in the borderlands is at a crossroads. Despite the important structural differences between the Mexican and U.S. higher education systems, there are many similarities in the challenges and areas of opportunity that each country faces. This common ground offers a substantial opportunity to deal with our shared issues in a more coordinated and comprehensive manner. Building collaborative relationships and developing common agendas, while recognizing and respecting our differences, is a feasible task-but not an easy one.

A review of the major national and regional agendas for higher education in both countries[24] and an analysis of the strategic plans of various borderlands higher education institutions show significant similarities concerning the major challenges faced by both countries. However, the similarity of the challenges, their priority, the interpretation of the problems, and the actions being taken to address them, vary between countries as well as from one institution to another.

Efforts such as BORDER PACT are intended to foster a shared analysis, and to provide a permanent forum to facilitate higher education collaboration in the borderlands.

The principal issues that borderlands higher education institutions are dealing with offer a preliminary agenda to begin our collaborative efforts. These areas include:

1) EXPANDING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND SERVING "NEW" CLIENTS. Due to the rapid population growth over the past decade in the borderlands, the issue of access is a critical one in both countries, but at different levels. By comparison, the issue is much more critical in Mexico, though it is of increasing significance to higher education policy in the U.S. Wide-scale expansion of existing higher education institutions or creation of new ones is unlikely in both countries. Innovative and non-traditional cross-border collaborative efforts must be developed in order to address this need. Meeting the educational needs of the adult student and the non-traditional student population—growing in numbers particularly in the U.S.-is yet another area that merits attention.

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[24] This includes an analysis of Mexico's National Plan for Educational Development 1995-2000; the NASULGC Kellogg Commission, WICHE's "Meeting the Challenges" report, and even President Clinton's Ten Principles on Education. Institutional documents included: the strategic plans and/or presidential term programs of the University of Sonora, UABC, CETYS and UANL for Mexico; and for the U.S., similar documents were analyzed from the CSU System, Western Governors University, SDSU, the University of Arizona, and the International Consortium for Economic Development (ICED) which is part of an important group of borderlands community colleges.

2) MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING QUALITY. The issue of quality is crucial to higher education institutions worldwide. Again, despite the different contexts, institutions on both sides of the border must address the need to find innovative ways to maintain and improve quality on all levels, and on a regional basis. These areas include: program review, faculty credentials and development, student performance, assessment, certification, and accreditation.

3) INCREASING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS' INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR HOST COMMUNITIES AND ELEVATING THEIR ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. The need for educational institutions to become more connected to and involved in their surrounding communities is increasingly evident. In this regard, programs and activities that relate to the needs of the region as a whole must be developed and maintained on an ongoing basis. These programs could address some of the issues identified in the study, such as environment, health, education, trade, and economic development.

4) IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS. Societies on both sides of the border are demanding that institutions become more effective and that their accountability be increased. Institutions must respond to their constituents with clear and tangible results, provide more flexible and open institutions, and increase their productivity. Massive additional amounts of money will not be forthcoming in the near future which demands that institutions develop creative strategies to deal with this fiscal reality. A borderlands partnership approach could assist institutions and use their shared resources more productively. Despite the many constraints, a win-win situation can be attained if the case is made appropriately to our constituents.

Other issues to consider for our collaborative agenda include:

- Using technology to create distributed learning environments and education-on-demand.

- Creating more meaningful and effective partnerships with business, government and community-based organizations.

- Fostering cross-cultural and diversity awareness inside the institutions of higher education and in their surrounding communities.

In summary, cross-border collaboration opportunities relate to almost every area of operation in higher education institutions. Now is the time to act on these opportunities.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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APPENDIX A

BORDER PACT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding between the Consortium for North American Higher Education Cooperation (CONAHEC), the Asociación Nacional de Universidades y Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANUIES), the American Council on Education (ACE), and participating institutions, reflects our general agreement to work in partnership with Mexican and U.S. colleges and universities established in the border region to focus attention on border issues and to collaborate and share resources in response to the region's needs.

We agree to work to advance agendas and develop ideas that are advantageous to all participants from the U.S. and Mexico. The border region is an ideal area for collaboration to increase the academic mobility of students and faculty and to foster research, promote the internationalization of higher education, and to create a more active role for higher education institutions in public service. Opportunities abound for collaborative efforts which address issues related to education, health care, housing and community development, social services, regional planning, business development, transportation, the environment, and regional economic development.

We agree to the following roles as co-signers:

Institutions:

- Act as agents of change in our host borderland communities through academic collaboration with higher education institutions across the border as well as with organizations working to respond to the region's needs
- Develop projects of collaboration
- Designate contact persons to support specific collaborative efforts
- Provide resources to support each of these efforts, as deemed appropriate and necessary by the partners
- Actively pursue the involvement of community based organizations, foundations, and local governments in BORDER PACT initiatives.

ACE and ANUIES:

- Co-convene periodic meetings of BORDER PACT participants
- Collaborate in the exchange and dissemination of pertinent information
- Seek resources to support collaborative efforts that respond to the goals of the network
- Communicate with our member institutions regarding the development of the BORDER PACT network.
- Link BORDER PACT to the ACE/ANUIES U.S.-Mexico Higher Education Network in an appropriate manner.

CONAHEC:

- Co-convene periodic meetings of BORDER PACT members
- Maintain a list of members
- Provide administrative office support for BORDER PACT
- Facilitate electronic communications among participating organizations and institutions through the EL NET network and other means as appropriate
- Collaborate in the exchange of information and networking.

In the spirit of international understanding and goodwill, we sign this Memorandum of Understanding at Tijuana, B.C. Mexico, on August 28, 1997, in recognition of our common interest to foster genuine and mutually beneficial academic collaboration.

Tijuana, B.C., August 28, 1997